

**General Assembly**

Sixty-fifth session

Official Records

Distr.: General
11 March 2011

Original: English

**Special Political and Decolonization Committee
(Fourth Committee)****Summary record of the 6th meeting**

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Friday, 8 October 2010, at 3 p.m.

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* Reissued for technical reasons on 9 March 2011.

** Items which the Committee has decided to consider together.

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda item 55: Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories transmitted under Article 73 e of the Charter of the United Nations (*continued*) (A/65/23, A/65/23/Corr.1, chaps. VII and XII, and A/65/66)

Agenda item 56: Economic and other activities which affect the interests of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories (*continued*) (A/65/23, A/65/23/Corr.1, chaps. V and XII)

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Agenda item 58: Offers by Member States of study and training facilities for inhabitants of Non-Self-Governing Territories (*continued*) (A/65/67)

Agenda item 59: Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (*Territories not covered under other agenda items*) (*continued*) (A/65/23, A/65/23/Corr.1, chaps. VIII, IX, X, XI and XII, A/65/306 and A/65/330)

1. **Mr. Emvula** (Namibia), speaking on behalf of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and expressing the Community's full support for the Secretary-General's efforts to implement the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, said it was disheartening that colonialism still existed in the twenty-first century.

2. Since the General Assembly had consistently recognized the inalienable right of the Sahrawi people to self-determination and independence, the continuous foreign occupation of Western Sahara posed a serious challenge to the authority and credibility of the United Nations and to humanity at large. He urged the international community not to turn a blind eye to the situation in Western Sahara.

3. While SADC supported Security Council resolution 1920 (2010) which, inter alia, called upon the two parties to the conflict to show political will and work together to make substantive progress in negotiations, it was concerned that the positions of the

parties had remained virtually the same since the fourth round of negotiations. However, the Secretary-General was to be commended for his efforts to move the process into an intensive, substantive fifth round of negotiations.

4. Expressing concern over continuing reports of violations of the human rights of the Sahrawi people, he urged the Security Council to mandate the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to investigate such violations throughout Western Sahara. SADC was also deeply concerned about the prolonged crisis in the Middle East, especially the untold suffering inflicted on the people of Palestine under the Israeli occupation and the denial of their fundamental rights to self-determination. It was encouraging that direct talks between the parties had resumed.

5. **Mr. Ramafale** (Lesotho), noting that colonization had no place in the modern world, said it was regrettable that in a portion of Africa, Western Sahara was still under the colonial yoke. Its people suffered internal displacement and human rights abuses and were forced to seek asylum. It was incumbent upon all States to defend, preserve and promote the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

6. Lesotho would continue with its long-standing, principled political support and solidarity with the just cause of the Sahrawi people and believed that an independent Western Sahara was a justified and realistic proposition that would bring peace to the subregion. That issue must therefore be addressed with all impartiality and vigour by the international community. The impasse between Morocco and the Sahrawi Arab Republic would not be resolved until the people of Western Sahara had exercised their inalienable right to self-determination. He called on the parties to continue negotiations on an equal footing with a view to arriving at a lasting solution to the question of Western Sahara.

7. Noting that the entire international community needed to work together to minimize the effects of colonization, he said that offers by some Member States of study and training facilities for inhabitants of Non-Self-Governing Territories were commendable. He urged the rest of the international community to emulate their example.

8. **Mr. Rao** Wu (China) recalled the substantial progress achieved in the decolonization process since the adoption by the General Assembly of the historic Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, and the declaration of the Second International Decade for the Elimination of Colonialism. Despite the considerable assistance provided by the Special Committee on decolonization to the people of the Non-Self-Governing Territories, including through the holding of referendums on future political arrangements, there were still 16 Non-Self-Governing Territories with 2 million inhabitants; and the decolonization process still had a long way to go.

9. Under the Charter of the United Nations and the Declaration on decolonization, it was incumbent upon Member States to assist the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories to exercise their inalienable right to self-determination. China, which had consistently supported the people of Non-Self-Governing Territories in their efforts to exercise their right to self-determination, was in favour of the declaration of a third International Decade for the Elimination of Colonialism and hoped that the Special Committee on decolonization would continue to strengthen contacts with Non-Self-Governing Territories and make further progress in the decolonization process. He urged the administering Powers and the United Nations to engage in closer cooperation in that regard.

10. **Mr. Bak Sahraei** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that the Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism was about to end yet 16 Non-Self-Governing Territories had not been able to exercise their right to self-determination. Implementation of the United Nations decolonization mandate required close cooperation among the international community, the administering Powers and the people of Non-Self-Governing Territories themselves.

11. The administering Powers were responsible for promoting the political, economic, social and educational advancement of the people in the Territories under their administration, a prerequisite for any decision to change the status of Non-Self-Governing Territories. They should not only protect the human and natural resources of those Territories against possible abuses but should also take steps to ensure that the interests of the peoples of those Territories, including their cultural and social integrity, were not adversely affected. In that regard, the impact of the military activities of administering Powers on

the environment, economic development and health of the population in some Non-Self-Governing Territories was a matter of serious concern.

12. He reiterated his delegation's full support for the Special Committee but felt that the Committee should enhance its efficiency, improve its interaction and cooperation with administering Powers and ensure the active participation of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories in determining their own future. His delegation supported the declaration of a third International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism and sincerely hoped that the entire international community would recommit itself to bringing about a complete end to the scourge of colonization during that Decade. He commended the Department of Political Affairs and the Department of Public Information for their role in furthering the cause of decolonization through the provision of necessary technical and advisory services to the people of the Territories and the dissemination of relevant information on the activities of the United Nations concerning decolonization.

13. **Mr. Haroon** (Pakistan) said that the Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism was coming to an end but colonialism continued. Suitable conditions had not been created in the Non-Self-Governing Territories for their inhabitants to be able to exercise their inalienable right to self-determination. Indeed, many cross-cutting issues relating to colonialism needed to be addressed in a holistic manner through a sustained dialogue between the administering Powers and the Non-Self-Governing Territories, with the Special Committee playing a key role as an impartial arbiter.

14. His delegation supported the recommendation that a third International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism should be launched. However, the General Assembly and Security Council had to demonstrate greater political will. Concerted efforts should be made to ensure a non-selective implementation of United Nations resolutions, since selective resolutions undermined the credibility of the Organization, deepened conflicts and compounded the sufferings of peoples.

15. That was particularly true in cases of resolutions regarding the right to self-determination of peoples under colonial domination and foreign occupation. Negation of that fundamental human right, guaranteed

by the Charter and recognized under relevant human rights conventions, ignited conflicts and threatened peace and security, as evidenced by the Middle East conflict, which was caused by the continued denial of the right to self-determination of the Palestinian people, and the Jammu and Kashmir dispute in South Asia between India and Pakistan over the denial of the Kashmiri people's right to self-determination.

16. Pakistan continued to support the just struggle of the Palestinian people for peace and freedom. It was willing to engage India in a comprehensive dialogue to normalize relations between the two countries by finding amicable solutions to the dispute. Indeed, the decolonization agenda of the United Nations would be incomplete without resolution of that dispute.

17. Turning to the question of Western Sahara, he expressed the hope that the parties to the dispute would, in a spirit of accommodation and goodwill, achieve a just and mutually acceptable settlement to the dispute which would bring peace to the region and better opportunities for millions of people.

18. **Mr. Arriola Ramírez** (Paraguay) said that his country's position on the legitimate rights of the Argentine Republic with respect to the long-standing sovereignty dispute over the Malvinas Islands, South Georgia Islands and South Sandwich Islands was decisive and consistent. In that regard, it was appropriate to recall the Declaration on the Malvinas Islands issued by the Heads of State of MERCOSUR, Bolivia and Chile at Potrero de Funes in 1996, and the 1999 Asunción Declaration, which called upon the parties to resolve the dispute peacefully and put an end to the colonial situation in those islands.

19. The lack of genuine progress in the bilateral dialogue between Argentina and the United Kingdom was regrettable. Firm political will would be required in order to reach a satisfactory settlement to the sovereignty issue, which must take into account Argentina's historical claims to the islands in question.

20. The idea that part four of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and the European Union's overseas association decisions applied to the Malvinas Islands, South Georgia Islands and South Sandwich Islands was utterly incompatible with Argentina's historical and legitimate rights over those territories and failed to take the existence of a sovereignty dispute into account.

21. Lastly, his delegation once again rejected the activities to explore for non-renewable natural resources on the Argentine continental shelf carried out by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, in flagrant violation of United Nations General Assembly resolution 31/49, and expressed the hope that the Argentine and United Kingdom Governments would continue to strengthen their political, economic and cultural relations with a view to satisfactorily resolving the sovereignty dispute over the Malvinas Islands, South Georgia Islands and South Sandwich Islands.

22. **Mr. Aisi** (Papua New Guinea) said that although the end of the Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism was approaching, much remained to be done to promote self-determination in the remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories. He welcomed the good work being done by the United Nations Department of Public Information and the Department of Political Affairs and their continued collaboration with administering Powers to disseminate information on decolonization and provide assistance to the Territories. He also welcomed the assistance extended to Non-Self-Governing Territories by certain specialized agencies and related organizations of the United Nations system, in particular the United Nations Development Programme.

23. Noting that marked progress had been made in the efforts of New Caledonia and Tokelau towards self-determination, he commended the administering Powers, France and New Zealand, for their supportive and constructive roles in that regard. He was encouraged to note that New Caledonia was earnestly engaging with the United Nations on the path towards self-determination and welcomed the participation of the Government of New Caledonia in the work of the Committee. While there had been some positive developments, other challenges continued to face the Territory. He supported the call for assistance, especially in the areas of training and technical assistance.

24. The Nouméa Accord provided an appropriate framework for all parties in the process to set the future course of New Caledonia; in that regard, he urged them to maintain their dialogue. Owing to the success of the regional seminar held by the Special Committee on decolonization in Nouméa in May 2010, strong consideration should be given to holding all

future seminars of the Special Committee in one of the Non-Self-Governing Territories.

25. On the question of Tokelau, his delegation welcomed the progress made towards devolution of powers to the village councils, in particular the delegation of the Administrator's powers to the three village councils, with effect from 1 July 2004. He also took note of the commendable efforts aimed at strengthening the socio-economic development and well-being of the islands and welcomed with appreciation the positive and continued contribution to the development of Tokelau by the administering Power.

26. He also welcomed the ongoing constitutional review process in American Samoa. Bearing in mind the representations made by various groups from Guam, his delegation encouraged an open and transparent process between the people of the Territory and the administering Power.

27. The Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism was drawing to a close, but that did not mean that the General Assembly would cease to consider the status of Non-Self-Governing Territories. General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) continued to be the fundamental basis for addressing questions of self-determination. His delegation endorsed the calls for the Committee to unanimously recommend to the General Assembly the draft resolution on the Third Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism.

28. **Mr. Badji** (Senegal) said that as the Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism drew to a close, it was appropriate to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (resolution 1514 (XV)). It was regrettable that despite the many successes of the Organization's decolonization efforts, some colonial territories remained on which no agreement had been reached. He appealed to all concerned parties to enable the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories to freely express their will, as provided for in resolution 1514 (XV) and other relevant resolutions.

29. The question of Western Sahara was of particular concern to Senegal, which shared a common history and enjoyed good relations with the Kingdom of Morocco. Senegal firmly supported the Moroccan

proposal to grant broad autonomy to the Saharan region within the framework of the sovereignty of the Kingdom of Morocco. That realistic, reasonable proposal offered the best prospects for a political, definitive and mutually acceptable solution to the question of Western Sahara. Senegal was dedicated to strengthening the brotherly relations among all the countries of the Maghreb and of the African continent as a whole. It considered it imperative to discourage all forms of separatism and prevent any breakdown of the social fabric in the Maghreb.

30. His delegation thus supported the laudable efforts of the Secretary-General and his Personal Envoy to achieve a just and lasting solution to the conflict. Since his appointment in January 2009, the Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General had held in-depth consultations on the current positions of the parties and ways of moving into a more intensive phase of negotiation on substantive questions, with a view to making it possible to hold a fifth round of direct talks.

31. Both parties had to show a spirit of compromise and enter into the negotiations in good faith so as not to lose the momentum towards a settlement in accordance with the Charter. As the guarantor of international peace and security, the Security Council should become more involved and give clearer direction so as to ensure the stability, integration and development of the region and allow the refugees to live a normal life in their own land.

32. **Mr. Iddi** (United Republic of Tanzania) said that as the international community celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV), it was unfortunate that Western Sahara remained the only colony on the African continent. In that regard, he supported the declaration issued at the recent Special Session of the African Union in Tripoli, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, on the consideration and resolution of conflicts in Africa, welcomed the efforts of the Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General for Western Sahara and referred to Security Council resolution 1871 (2009), which, inter alia, called for a mutually acceptable political solution that would provide for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara.

33. His delegation also welcomed the fact that Security Council resolution 1920 (2010) had stressed the need to address the human dimension of the conflict in Western Sahara and urged the Security

Council to include the monitoring of human rights in the mandate of MINURSO. The Security Council should use its authority to advance the process and decisively break the stalemate in the conflict.

34. He reaffirmed Senegal's support for all people under colonial rule in their efforts to exercise their inalienable rights to self-determination, including independence, in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the United Nations on decolonization.

35. **Ms. Cavanagh** (New Zealand) welcomed the draft resolution on the question of Tokelau. Twice in the past five years, the people of Tokelau had voted in United Nations-supervised referendums on self-determination; however, in neither of those exercises had Tokelau's electorate reached the threshold that they themselves had set for a change of status from that of Territory to one of self-government in free association with New Zealand. Strange as the result might seem, the status quo remained an option that should be fully respected.

36. While self-determination was important, so too was development and maintaining the viability of small and vulnerable communities like those in Tokelau. It was for that reason that leaders from Tokelau and New Zealand had agreed in early 2008 to focus on improving essential services on the atolls, rather than moving in the medium term to a further act of self-determination. That continued to be the approach both partners were taking, which was particularly appropriate at a time when global challenges added extra pressure onto such communities.

37. Although Tokelau's needs were primarily met by New Zealand, the international community also provided assistance through the United Nations Development Programme and the World Health Organization in particular. New Zealand was committed to enabling the people of Tokelau to exercise their right to self-determination. It would continue to report to the Special Committee on any developments there.

38. **Mr. Cancela** (Uruguay) said the fact that 2010 marked the fiftieth anniversary of resolution 1514 (XV) and the end of the Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism should serve as a call for the Committee to redouble its efforts to achieve the exercise of the right of self-determination in the Non-Self-Governing Territories by promoting dialogue

and cooperation between the administering Powers and their Territories.

39. Uruguay had consistently supported the Argentine Republic's legitimate sovereignty claim over the Malvinas Islands, South Georgia Islands and South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas not solely because Argentina was its neighbour, but also because of the geographical, historical and legal basis for that claim. Since the adoption of resolution 2065 (XX), the General Assembly and the Special Committee on decolonization had consistently held that the question of the Malvinas Islands was a special and particular colonial situation involving a sovereignty dispute between the Argentine Republic and the United Kingdom, which could only be resolved through a peaceful and negotiated settlement. Accordingly, the Governments of the Argentine Republic and the United Kingdom should resume negotiations as soon as possible in order to find a peaceful, just and lasting solution to the sovereignty dispute in accordance with the relevant resolutions and declarations of the United Nations, the Organization of American States and the provisions and objectives of the Charter of the United Nations, including the principle of territorial integrity. It was also important to refrain from taking any unilateral measures, including activities to explore for non-renewable natural resources on the Argentine continental shelf being undertaken by the United Kingdom.

40. With regard to the question of Western Sahara, the international community should give the Secretary-General and his Personal Envoy for Western Sahara its fullest support, so that the talks between the Kingdom of Morocco and the Frente Polisario could be resumed as soon as possible in order to reach a just, lasting and mutually acceptable political solution to that conflict, resulting in self-determination for the people of Western Sahara. It was also important to support any positive and constructive actions that had the potential to bring the parties together, such as the confidence-building family visits and a depoliticized view of the human aspect of the conflict. Therefore, Uruguay supported the adoption of the draft resolution on the question of Western Sahara by consensus.

41. **Mr. Adoumasse** (Benin) said that the report of the Secretary-General on the question of Western Sahara provided a remarkably objective description of the developments in the Territory and highlighted the importance of continuing United Nations engagement

in the efforts to break the deadlock in the negotiations between the parties.

42. The mutual accusations of human rights violations were a cause of concern. Referring to the health situation of the families in the camps, he said that the international community should strengthen its support for the organizations working with the Sahrawi people to reduce the incidence of malnutrition-related anaemia. He urged all parties to make every effort to ensure the resumption of the family visit flights as soon as possible. Progress in that regard would augur well for the forthcoming informal consultations. Indeed, his delegation hoped that the efforts of the Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General for Western Sahara to facilitate such consultations between the parties would lead to substantial progress on crucial aspects of that conflict.

43. The overriding interest of the people should motivate all parties to be realistic and opt for a negotiated solution under the auspices of the international community. The new threats in the Sahara could seriously jeopardize the stability of the whole region, so the international community must endeavour to address them quickly. In that regard, the Moroccan autonomy proposal aimed at resolving the question of Western Sahara by consensus, which had been endorsed by both the General Assembly and the Security Council, deserved serious consideration by the international community together with the parties to the conflict.

44. He hailed the willingness of the parties to return to the negotiating table and Algeria's willingness to work with them on any agreement they might reach with regard to confidence-building measures and human rights matters. The parties should take advantage of the informal consultations to overcome their differences and put an end to the suffering of the Sahrawi people. The risk of prolonged destabilization in the region required security measures that could only succeed if the question of Western Sahara was resolved quickly.

45. **Mr. Kleib** (Indonesia) said that the work of the Special Committee would always be of particular importance to his country, since it had experienced the turmoil of colonial struggle first-hand. Therefore, his delegation would remain committed to accelerating the process of decolonization until there were no Territories left seeking liberation from colonialism, in

keeping with the legacy of the 1955 Asia-Africa Conference held in Bandung, Indonesia.

46. Decolonization was ultimately a political process aimed at reaching a peaceful, permanent political status for each Non-Self-Governing Territory, but it must also be accompanied by progress in other fields, mindful of the economic and social realities of each Territory. The Special Committee on decolonization had a central role in the United Nations decolonization process. The fact that there were still 16 Non-Self-Governing Territories demonstrated that the goals of decolonization remained a challenge. Member States should use the Third International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism to encourage all parties to achieve tangible results in a systematic and mutually beneficial manner.

47. With regard to one particular Territory, Indonesia's principled position was that the parties concerned should negotiate, taking into account its "special and particular" colonial situation, with the ultimate goal of serving the interests of the population of the Territory. All administering Powers should take the necessary steps to implement the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples and the relevant United Nations resolutions, in accordance with the freely expressed wishes of the peoples of the Territories concerned. Those administering Powers that had not yet done so should lend their full support to the work of the Special Committee and participate actively in its work relating to the Territories under their respective administrations. The constituents of the Non-Self-Governing Territories themselves should continue to do their part and take educated decisions on the three options available to them under resolution 1541 (XV). To that end, relevant United Nations bodies should provide them with much-needed economic and technical assistance.

48. **Mr. Ousseï** (Comoros) said that Africa continued to be the continent that suffered most from the destabilizing effects of conflict; it needed stability, peace and security in order to address the numerous challenges it was facing. Wars and conflicts hampered efforts to reduce poverty and strengthen African unity.

49. In Western Sahara, the force of arms and intransigence must give way to negotiation, especially since the parties to the conflict were one and the same nation, sharing the same cultural and religious values. The status quo was not a viable or acceptable option. A

constructive solution that was in the interest of all peoples of the greater Maghreb had to be found.

50. In that regard, Morocco's autonomy proposal offered a solution that reconciled its own right to sovereignty and territorial integrity with the rights of the people to exercise free and true self-determination, was a serious, viable and sensible option for all the parties concerned and would guarantee national integrity and stability throughout the region.

51. His delegation supported Security Council resolutions 1871 (2009) and 1920 (2010) and welcomed the commitment of the Secretary-General and his Personal Envoy to successful negotiations, aimed at achieving a just, lasting and acceptable political solution to the dispute. He called on the parties to overcome their differences and enter into a frank and sincere dialogue to ensure that the efforts of the international community would not be in vain.

52. **Mr. Kafando** (Burkina Faso) said that at the end of the Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, the international community must intensify its efforts on behalf of the 16 remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories. With ongoing cooperation between the people of the Non-Self-Governing Territories and their occupying or administering Powers, it ought to be possible to make significant progress. The international community, including the United Nations, must continue to support the Territories' social and economic development.

53. He was especially concerned about the implications of the situation of Western Sahara for subregional and international peace and security and urged the international community to find a political solution that was just and acceptable to all parties. The efforts of the Secretary-General's Personal Envoy to revive the political talks on the basis of Security Council resolution 1813 (2008) and build on the progress made to date were commendable. It was gratifying to note that despite the difficulties that had arisen in the course of the informal talks held by the Personal Envoy, the parties remained determined to explore the best way to reach a just and mutually acceptable solution for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara.

54. The status quo was clearly unacceptable and did not benefit either party to the conflict. He therefore reaffirmed his delegation's support for Security Council resolutions 1754 (2007), 1813 (2008), 1920

(2010) and other relevant resolutions, as well as the efforts of the Secretary-General to find a political solution. The Moroccan initiative for negotiating an autonomy statute for the Sahara region was an appropriate path towards settlement of the dispute. It was essential for the parties to begin negotiating substantive issues and to make the compromises needed to overcome their differences. Accordingly, both parties must abstain from any action or initiative that might jeopardize the success of the fifth round of negotiations.

55. There was no question about the importance of the MINURSO mission in Western Sahara or the Secretary-General's commitment to helping the parties in their negotiations. The international community must be involved in those efforts in order to ensure that the talks would lead to a lasting and mutually acceptable settlement.

56. **Mr. Sow** (Guinea) said it was regrettable that at the end of the Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, the international community was still not able to celebrate with due solemnity the fiftieth anniversary of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, owing to the slow pace of efforts to ensure self-determination for the peoples of the 16 remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories.

57. On the question of Western Sahara, his delegation welcomed the Moroccan proposal presented in April 2007, which had helped relaunch the negotiation process. Referring to Security Council resolution 1920 (2010), he said that there was no credible and reasonable alternative to the approach taken by the United Nations to find a peaceful and mutually acceptable solution and ensure self-determination for the people of Western Sahara.

58. He welcomed the appointment of Hany Abdel-Aziz as Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Western Sahara and Head of MINURSO and urged the parties and States in the region to cooperate fully with the Secretary-General and his Personal Envoy, Christopher Ross. Guinea looked forward to the fifth round of negotiations and supported the Security Council's appeal to the parties to continue to show political will and work in an atmosphere propitious to dialogue in order to enter into a more intensive and substantive phase of negotiations. His delegation urged the parties to demonstrate a spirit

of compromise and show that they had the will to move forward so as to ensure the success of the forthcoming informal meeting to be held in October 2010 under the auspices of the Personal Envoy.

59. **Mr. Windsor** (Australia) said that Australia had very deep and long-standing relations with many of the Non-Self-Governing Territories, particularly those in the Pacific. Australia supported the Nouméa Accord and the process towards greater autonomy for New Caledonia. He would like to recognize the very constructive role played by France in New Caledonia's decolonization process. He also wished to thank the Government and people of New Caledonia for their hospitality during the 2010 Pacific regional seminar, which Australia had attended as an observer.

60. The Committee should bear in mind that each of the Non-Self-Governing Territories was unique in terms of their histories, cultures, peoples, their constitutional situation, the challenges they faced and the opportunities they had. There was therefore no "cookie-cutter" solution that would fit all of them. It was up to the people of the Territories to decide their future. Bearing in mind the principle enshrined in the Charter that the interests of the inhabitants of the Territories were paramount, it was important that the Committee should hear directly from the people of the Non-Self-Governing Territories, as well as from the official representatives of those Territories.

61. It should be borne in mind that some of the Territories before the Committee were very small in size and population and required significant support from the relevant administering Powers. The obligations of the administering Powers were significant and in many cases, done well. He noted the Special Committee's praise for New Zealand for its excellent cooperation with Tokelau. Other Territories, while still requiring significant support, were relatively well off. New Caledonia, for example, had the second highest GDP per capita in the Pacific.

62. Many of the Territories, being island States, faced the challenges of climate change and fragile ecosystems. Working with all the small island developing States to address that most fundamental challenge was a top priority for Australia. His Government looked forward to working constructively at the upcoming United Nations Climate Change Conference in Cancun, Mexico. Many of the Territories could benefit from the work of the specialized agencies

of the United Nations, as well as from cooperation with regional organizations. His delegation welcomed New Caledonia's increasing engagement within the Pacific Islands Forum. Australia, for its part, offered university scholarships to people from Tokelau and New Caledonia.

63. The work of the Committee had not always been up to the standard that it should be, given the importance of the issues before it. Cooperation from administering Powers was important; so too was a non-political approach by Committee members. In the third International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, all members should aim to make the Committee's work as practical, efficient and effective as possible in order to be of service to the well-being of the inhabitants of the remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories.

64. **Ms. Bibalou** (Gabon) said that because 16 Non-Self-Governing Territories were still not independent despite the extraordinary decolonization successes of the United Nations, her delegation supported the proclamation of the period 2011-2020 as a Third International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism. At the same time, it urged the administering Powers to do what was necessary in each particular case to hasten decolonization.

65. In the case of Western Sahara, Gabon welcomed the resumption of talks between the parties to the dispute under the mediation of the Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General. Although the two sides were still far apart, the Moroccan autonomy initiative provided a basis for moving forward and the parties should now negotiate in good faith and without preconditions. The international community and especially the countries of the region should do everything possible to inject a new dynamism into the ongoing talks and seek to settle the open and latent differences that were causing tensions in the region, for the dispute threatened to destabilize it and encourage criminal activities there. The efforts being made by the Secretary-General and his Personal Envoy must be encouraged, and the Committee must maintain its usual constructive spirit based on consensus. Those were the only ways of breaking the current impasse and reaching a just, lasting and mutually acceptable political solution.

66. **Ms. Rubiales de Chamorro** (Nicaragua) said that in the drive for the total eradication of colonialism,

the declaration of a third International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism at the current session would offer a vital incentive. She expressed appreciation for the contributions and commitment of the Special Committee to that goal, and especially for having held a decolonization seminar in one of the dependent Territories, New Caledonia. All administering Powers should be more cooperative with the Committee in initiatives such as that, and in all its work.

67. In the Latin American and Caribbean region, Puerto Rico had long been a brave combatant against colonialism and for independence and was now an example of the struggle against militarism and the arms build-up in the region. Eight million Puerto Ricans both at home and in the United States were living under the colonial yoke, without being able to have their own sovereign State that would preserve their identity and culture and be an integral part of the Latin American and Caribbean region. As the Special Committee was doing, the General Assembly must give broader recognition to the colonial situation in Puerto Rico, and the administering Power must facilitate the process of self-determination.

68. Nicaragua fully supported the legitimate rights of Argentina in its dispute with the United Kingdom regarding sovereignty over the Malvinas Islands, South Georgia Islands and South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas, a dispute recognized by the international community as constituting a special and particular colonial situation requiring negotiations between the two parties. Argentina was prepared to resume negotiations over sovereignty, and the United Kingdom should show the same willingness to comply with its obligations as a Member of the Organization.

69. Nicaragua also stood in solidarity with the struggle of the Sahrawi people for self-determination and independence, and still hoped that the negotiations between the parties — the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic and Morocco — would continue without preconditions, so that the people of Western Sahara could exercise their right to self-determination.

70. **Mr. Al-Zayani** (Bahrain) recalled that the Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism was nearing its end, yet several Territories around the world remained under foreign occupation. Indeed, 50 years after the adoption of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, much still needed to be done to achieve

the goals set out in the Declaration. The Movement of Non-Aligned Countries was backing the declaration of a third International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism in the hope that all States would take swift action to eradicate colonialism completely. The United Nations should help to hasten that outcome, in keeping with the principles enunciated in the Charter. States, likewise, should act to exercise their right and duty to eliminate colonialism, apartheid and racial discrimination, in accordance with article 16 of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States.

71. **Mr. Bame** (Ethiopia) said that although so many former colonies had joined the United Nations, the Special Committee was right to stand firmly for the total eradication of colonialism in all dependent Territories. Ethiopia deplored the stalled process, after the earlier sweeping wave of decolonization. It was important for the administering Powers of the Territories and Member States to support and cooperate with the legitimate representatives of the Territories. Unfortunately, some administering Powers continued to be unwilling to work with the Special Committee, in violation of their Charter obligations. The Special Committee must find new ways to ensure the right of self-determination in all Non-Self-Governing Territories. At the same time, the United Nations funds and programmes and specialized agencies should expand their activities in the Territories with a view to improving the living conditions of the inhabitants.

72. **Mr. Loayza Barea** (Plurinational State of Bolivia) said that the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the adoption of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) would serve to emphasize that self-determination in the context of multilateralism was the only viable option for enabling peoples who were under colonial rule to freely decide on the development model they wished to pursue. He reiterated his Government's support for the cause of Puerto Rico, whose struggle was consistent with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of international law, and called on the United States Government to complete the decolonization process. His delegation supported the draft resolution adopted by the Special Committee (A/AC.109/2010/L.8), requesting the General Assembly to consider the question of Puerto Rico comprehensively in all its aspects.

73. He reiterated his delegation's support for Argentine rights over the Malvinas Islands, South

Georgia Islands and South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas; that dispute should be resolved on the basis of constructive dialogue and mutual trust. He called on all parties to work for a just, peaceful and definitive solution to the conflict. The situation of the Malvinas Islands was a special and particular one in that the issue was not one of self-determination but rather of sovereignty.

74. As the Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism came to an end, the international community must be more active in resolving the last remaining colonial situation in Africa, namely, that of Western Sahara. The efforts of the Secretary-General, through his Personal Envoy, were the appropriate mechanism for laying the foundation for a just and peaceful solution that would guarantee the future development of Western Sahara and the surrounding areas.

75. The work of specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system must continue and be strengthened. Priority attention must be given to the people of the Non-Self-Governing Territories.

76. **Ms. Santos** (Timor-Leste) said that as the international community celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the adoption of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV), it was regrettable that the negotiations on the question of Western Sahara remained at an impasse, and that the people of Western Sahara continued to be denied their fundamental right to choose their destiny. Stressing the similarities in the histories of Western Sahara and Timor-Leste, she said that the people of Timor-Leste had always supported the right of the people of Western Sahara to determine their future, bearing in mind the position taken by the African Union, the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and the Security Council of the United Nations and the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice.

77. The international legal consensus was unequivocal: continuing with the status quo was unacceptable and seriously threatened the stability of the region. As the United Nations had succeeded in organizing a referendum on self-determination in Timor-Leste in 1999, her delegation hoped that it would do likewise in Western Sahara.

78. She welcomed the recent visit by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to the

refugee camps in Western Sahara. Her delegation remained concerned about the human rights abuses and suffering of the Sahrawi people in the occupied Western Sahara.

79. **Mr. Nwosa** (Nigeria) said it was regrettable that 50 years after the adoption of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV), the Organization should still be saddled with the issue of decolonization. The case of Western Sahara, the last remaining colony in Africa, did not fit into the traditional definition of a colony. In recognition of that phenomenon, Nigeria had led like-minded African States to recognize the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic, paving the way for its admission into what had then been the Organization of African Unity. Nigeria was persuaded that the inalienable rights of the people of Western Sahara to self-determination and freedom were sacrosanct.

80. Nigeria's ardent aspiration was for peace to reign in the Territory so that the refugees and displaced people of Western Sahara could return to their homes. Accordingly, his Government endorsed the efforts of the United Nations to find a lasting solution to the conflict and supported the work of MINURSO. It was heartening that the United Nations-sponsored ceasefire agreement of 1991 had held without any major violations.

81. His delegation condemned the human rights violations that were reported to be widespread in the Territory, irrespective of which side was committing them. It supported any measures that would not only punish the offenders but also discourage future impunity. Nigeria remained committed to the use of diplomacy for the pursuit of peace in Western Sahara and regarded the holding of a referendum as a viable option for the self-determination of the Sahrawi people.

82. **Ms. Malenga** (Democratic Republic of the Congo) commended Morocco's initiative regarding negotiated autonomy for the Saharan region. She supported the efforts of the Secretary-General and his Personal Envoy to find a political solution to the conflict and supported the Secretary-General's appeal, in his latest report on the question of Western Sahara, regarding the importance of conducting a census and implementing a programme of individual interviews.

83. She urged all States in the region to pursue dialogue and show their commitment and political will to reach an acceptable solution, as called for in

Security Council resolution 1920 (2010). The regionalization plan proposed by the Kingdom of Morocco was evidence of its good faith and its spirit of compromise in the search for a negotiated political solution. The other parties involved should concentrate on the political process and show their willingness to enter into substantive negotiations.

Statements made in exercise of the right of reply

84. **Mr. Parham** (United Kingdom), replying to comments made by the representatives of Paraguay, Uruguay and Nicaragua regarding the issue of sovereignty over the Falkland Islands, said that the United Kingdom had no doubt about its sovereignty over the Territory and that there could be no negotiations on sovereignty unless and until the Islanders so wished.

85. The democratically elected representatives of the Falkland Islands had once again expressed their own views clearly during the latest session of the Special Committee on decolonization, asserting their right to self-determination as the original settlers of the Falkland Islands eight generations earlier, a time when there had been no indigenous inhabitants and hence no displacement of population.

86. **Mr. Argüello** (Argentina) said, in reply to the United Kingdom representative, that his Government considered that the Malvinas Islands, the South Georgia Islands, the South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas were an integral part of Argentine territory and that, having been illegally occupied by the United Kingdom, they were the subject of a sovereignty dispute between the two countries, as had been recognized repeatedly in successive General Assembly resolutions, all of which had urged the two Governments to resume negotiations in order to find a peaceful, lasting solution to the dispute. The Special Committee on decolonization had repeatedly issued declarations in that regard, most recently through the resolution adopted on 24 June 2010. The General Assembly of the Organization of American States had also adopted a new declaration on the question of the Malvinas Islands worded in similar terms, on 8 June 2010. Argentina reaffirmed its legitimate rights of national sovereignty over the Malvinas Islands, South Georgia Islands and South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas, which were an integral part of its national territory.

87. **Mr. Ja'afari** (Syrian Arab Republic), speaking as Rapporteur of the Special Committee, said that since the adoption of its report (A/65/23), some of the draft resolutions contained in chapter XII of the report should be made to reflect recent developments in the Non-Self-Governing Territories. Consultations were still being conducted on revising parts of the omnibus draft resolution on small Territories; but he could already propose the following revisions of draft resolution IV on the question of New Caledonia: paragraph 3 should be replaced with the following text:

“3. *Notes* the relevant provisions of the Nouméa accord aimed at taking more broadly into account the Kanak identity in the political and social organization of New Caledonia, and welcomes, in this context, the adoption on 18 August 2010 by the Government of New Caledonia of the law on the anthem, motto and banknote designs;”.

88. In addition, paragraph 21 should be replaced with the following text:

“21. *Recalls with satisfaction*, in this regard, the participation of New Caledonia at the forty-first summit of the Pacific Islands Forum, held in Port Vila, Vanuatu, on 4 and 5 August 2010, following its accession to the Forum as an associate member in October 2006;”.

89. He took it that the Committee agreed to those revisions.

90. *It was so decided.*

The meeting rose at 6.10 p.m.